

ed States, reduces the possibility that our own vision, our own criteria, our own particular form of understanding the problems of continental and international policy, will acquire the dimension required." The OAS, insisted President Gaviria, "is non-functional as Latin America's interlocutor in world politics."

Gaviria added that a Latin American forum was required because "Latin America, as a region, has a unique identity and set of problems, and has been unable to express itself effectively in the world context. In the contemporary world, it is necessary that Latin America be a valid political and economic interlocutor in the face of the great actors of the international system."

In his speech, the President also condemned the U.S. military invasion of Panama, saying that "there exist those who see in the democratization process a justification for intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. It is evident that not all countries are advancing in the direction of constructing a pluralist system and not all at the same rate. These very differences among nations should be respected." The Colombian President added that the democratization of Eastern Europe was not being accomplished through force, and insisted that "democracy cannot be used to justify the

setting aside of the principle of non-intervention."

### Gaviria's dilemma

The integration seminar marks a time of great decision for President Gaviria: whether to carry forward Galán's policies—that is, Ibero-American integration, the war on the drug cartels, the destruction of corrupt political machines—or to link up with the traditional political elites of the country. If he takes the latter path, and there are heavy pressures for him to do this, he will seek out "peace agreements" with the drug traffickers via pacts with the political machine of another ex-President, the cynical Alfonso López Michelsen. He will also make deals to lift all restrictions on imports under the so-called Open Door (*Apertura*) demanded by the United States, which would ravage national industry and agriculture, and shore up the drug traffickers.

On the night of Aug. 15, the seminar organizers prepared a huge banquet in Galán's honor, which was designed as a permanent reminder to the President of his political origins. During the banquet, a book on the life of Galán was presented, along with a videotape on the same theme. While the 4,000 participants at the dinner shouted "He lives! Galán is with us!" the foundation directors presented President Gavi-

## Galán: Continental unity is the key to survival

*The following are excerpts from a 1985 speech given by Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento, which were included in his father's presentation to the Latin American Meeting on Democracy and Integration, held in Bogotá Aug. 15 under the auspices of the Luis Carlos Galán Foundation.*

All of Latin America is in convulsion, and I think will continue to be in convulsion at least through the end of the century, because the political, social, and economic responses are in crisis. The economic horizon is dark, and will continue to be dark.

The problem of the debt is very serious for the countries of Latin America. This problem will put an end to ideological conflicts, and will reunite all the forces of Latin America, because our security, our autonomy, our chances for development, and our role in the entire world are at stake. Colombia itself already has a very serious foreign debt problem—worse than the country has been allowed to believe. At first glance, our debt difficulties are not as critical as those of Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Peru or Panama. But they are nonetheless very serious. . . .

The most serious is that the debt service figures will continue to grow, and to the extent this occurs, it will continue to compromise the state's ability to invest and will continue to condition the state's ability to respond to social and economic problems.

This is not merely a problem of Colombia. It is a problem of all of America, and must be understood as a Latin American problem with political dimensions that should be posed in all their aspects, if an answer is to be forthcoming. Latin America finds itself facing two crises, each of them very serious and their sum terrible: the crisis of North-South relations on the one hand, and the crisis of East-West relations on the other.

In the face of these two crises, it is necessary to organize strategies; it is indispensable to come up with policies if we truly want serious, and not just spur-of-the-moment and transitory responses. If we want to build and consolidate democracy in our countries, we need there to be a Latin American response to the problem of the foreign debt, and a Latin American response to the problems of security. Latin America cannot wait for its redemption to come through aid from some foreign power, whether its influence be old or new within the region. Our transformation and our progress are goals that can only be achieved through our own efforts and our own capacity to politically organize ourselves and to give our economies another direction. . . .